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[Samsung M610 Review](#)

Low, low, low - budget, features, size

Samsung is back-tracking from time to time – but more often lately – to the beginning of the mobile industry, just to deliver us some of the basic phones that we used to have 4-5 years ago. Samsung M610 is such a device that offers standard functionality at a very reasonable price. Bearing the same slider form signature that resemble the highly-addictive U600 and D900 'uber-phones', Samsung's M610 handset has a noticeable target, those with low budgets. Still, do not think that this phone it's all about looks, as it embeds all functions a more evolved phone includes these days, only not to such a high standards. Obviously, M610 is not a new phone by its look or features, and doesn't come up with any innovations, but it's really a cheap, pretty nice phone. The phone has been announced in October 2007 and made available one month later, in November. You'll be surprised, but the phone costs no more than \$200 USD, even less if you opt for a contract (some carriers are offering it for free). **Design**If you are a Samsung fan, than you will be happy with M610's looks. The handset features the standard slider form specific to the majority of Samsung's sliders. Obviously this isn't bad, but that actually makes the phone a little bit 'dull' in terms of design. Still, what saves it is the low price that it is offered with. While not the sleekest slider on the market, the handset measures (99 x 45 x 17.5 mm) and weight (90 grams, battery included) marks it as a small device compared with other low-end handsets in its class (see Nokia 6085). The phone is available in 2 colors – black and blue – and both give it a little bit of that glamorous look specific mostly to fashionistas handsets. The main reason for that is the glossy paint that sparkles and, what's more important, the fact that it doesn't catch fingerprints. As always, the first impression matters, and Samsung M610 will most likely catch your eye because of its smaller size compared with other more powerful Samsung's sliders. Either good or bad, Samsung M610 features only a few external keys and ports. In fact, there is only a universal port (Samsung standard) for charging the device or attaching the headset that comes with the phone, placed on the right side, a dual volume key and a microSD slot card, both found on the left side of the phone. Despite its small size, the keypad of the phone is very easy to use and satisfy even the heaviest SMS-text sender. The big D-pad button responds very well to the touch and makes the phone's menu very easy to navigate. The auto-sliding mechanism works like a charm and looks solid enough for such a cheap phone made of plastic. Overall, Samsung's M610 slider makes a good impression as a low-budget phone, but fails to stand out from the crowd. **Display and Camera**Don't expect too much from Samsung's M610 display, as you'll be truly disappointed. Known as one of the best mobile display manufacturer, Samsung included only a mediocre (almost crappy) screen onto this low-budget slider. The 1.8 inch CSTN display supports no more than 65k colors and a small resolution (128 x 160 pixels) for today's standards. Furthermore, the phone is almost useless in strong sunlight, so learn to find some shadowy places when outdoors. The pictures look very crappy, even the menu is a pain to use with such a low visual quality. Overall, this is one of the worst displays embedded in one of the latest Samsung's mobile phones. Unfortunately, the same goes for its camera, which is the lowest possible. If you are looking to buy a phone with good or mediocre camera capabilities, then look for something else, as M610 is the worst in terms of picturing. The VGA camera is capable of taking snapshots with a maximum resolution of 640 x 480 pixels, which is lower than expected, even for such a low-budget phone. You can even record clips with a maximum resolution of 160 x 120 pixels, but I wouldn't recommend it, as you won't be able to see anything on a bigger display. There are some settings available when using the camera, like Scene program, White balance, Exposure metering

and Effects (Black and white, Negative, Sepia, Emboss, Sketch), but those will not improve the quality. The sample pictures you can see below suggest that the camera module is definitely a losing bet for those expecting some quality. The sample below has been executed under 360 watts of continuous tungsten light, especially created to test the quality of the camera module.

Menu and Software There are many people that are not buying a Samsung handset simply because they don't suffer Samsung's user interface. Obviously, if this is the case with you, then Samsung's M610 won't be a good choice. The slider embeds the specific Samsung menu and some of the applications and software, but on a lower scale. There is little customization possible with the handset, but, even if you had more choices, having such a low quality display takes its toll. There's no way that you can make your phone look better on the 'inside', not even equally good as the 'outside'. You cannot change the alarm tones, but at least you can choose your own ringtones, as those used by default are either annoying or simply too low. Samsung tried to include some basic applications that we can also find in more evolved mobiles, but to an improved level. Some of these include: Calculator, Alarm (only 5 available), Planner, World clock, Memo, Timer, Stopwatcher and a surprisingly complex Converter. The phone also supports Java applications and games, but to a lower degree, as files larger than 300KB will not run. Moreover, there's a slight possibility that some of the smaller size application will not work either because of the low quality display or some other unknown reasons. The handset is definitely not made for those that are usually surfing the Internet. Either the small display or the crappy browser will make you give this feature up. The integrated browser cannot display pages that are larger than 300KB, thus lowering the Internet capabilities. Anyway, for a low-budget handset, the slider features a whole range of useful applications that are mostly used by owners.

Communications I was surprised to find that Samsung M610 features EDGE (Class 10, 236.8 kbps) technology besides the usual GPRS (Class 10 (4+1/3+2 slots), 32 - 48 kbps). Still, that doesn't make it better as the browser capabilities are far too low to satisfy any needs. Mostly, you will use WAP to download applications that you need and think that will run on the slider, because there is no way you can actually browse Internet pages. I wasn't even able to test its EDGE data transfer speed, as the slider didn't seem to be able to work with the application that I use. Other connectivity solutions include USB 1.1 and Bluetooth 2.0 with A2DP support. The latter is also a wonder for a device that isn't music dedicated. There's only basic email support, and you can store around 250 SMS's in the phone's memory. The triband (GSM 850 / GSM 1800 / GSM 1900) network compatible handset has a mediocre GSM signal reception. The sound is pretty defective, but loud enough. I have experienced terrible sound from time to time, so I wouldn't rate it more than 5 on a 1 to 10 scale.

Processor and Memory Samsung M610 features an ARM9 family processor running at speeds up to 150 MHz. The mid-level CPU makes a good addition to the technical specifications of the slider, as the menu browsing is very smooth. As expected, Samsung M610 features a mere 5MB internal memory available for the end user. What's interesting is the fact that it also features a microSD slot card that will enable user to expand the storage space. This greatly improves the slider's functionality, as you can store more MP3 files and/or pictures.

Multimedia Purposely built to attract people that are using their handsets as MP3 players too, Samsung's M610 could not miss the opportunity to sell a low-end phone featuring music capabilities. Despite the slider features a music player and FM Radio, we cannot talk about quality. Sound is purely mediocre with no bass at all; vibes are sounding dull and almost boring. Those who are used with high quality sound features will definitely reject it from the start. The FM Radio sounds a little bit better, but again there is no way we can talk about quality. The features have been embedded simply to a low quality level, but at least can be used in background mode. There is also a Voice recorder limited to the amount of free memory.

Battery A medium power 800 mAh Li-Ion battery supplies Samsung's M610 slider. The phone's official numbers states a 5 hours talk time and 250 hours standby time. Should these be true the phone would have scored a strong point. In fact, the phone didn't last more than 3 hours talk

time and about 4 days in standby mode. While this is no low accomplishment, it is neither good for a low-end handset which doesn't have any high features to exhaust the battery faster. **Impressions**At the first glance, I got the feeling that Samsung can do better than this when developing a low-budget handset that has a specific target. Even if M610 is a low-end slider, this doesn't mean all its features need to be at the lowest quality. Sadly, apart from its design and price, I wouldn't bet on the success of this mobile phone on the market. **The Good**Wickedly, Samsung M610 looks good on the outside. If this makes you buy it, well, it is the only truly good thing you will get. Anyway, that much you pay, that much it worths, so there's another positive thing about this basic slider.**The Bad**Everything about the M610 says "bad", so I wouldn't know where to start. All the features are almost at the lowest level, making it a pretty standard phone that you only use for talking. Those with low budget will definitely enjoy its features, but, I wonder, for how long?**Sales package**Samsung M610 handsetStandard battery Li-Ion 800 mAhTravel Charger HeadsetUser Manual*Photo: Tudor Raiciu for Softpedia.com*